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September 23, 2005

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

I am writing to request information relating to contracts awarded to Carnival Cruise Lines to provide temporary housing to persons displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

According to information provided by the U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command, FEMA chartered three Carnival cruise ships for a six month period to be deployed at Gulf Coast ports to accommodate evacuees and relief personnel.¹ Combined, these three ships can accommodate 7,116 passengers.² The total value of the contract is reportedly \$192 million, with an additional reimbursement for expenses of up to \$44 million.³

I fully appreciate the urgency of providing temporary housing for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. However, I am concerned about the costs of the contract. Many of the berths are going unfilled, which could make the costs per person extraordinarily high.⁴ Even if all the berths were filled, the cost for a family of five appears to exceed \$20,000 per month. This would appear to be far more than other options, such as providing community-based housing.

¹ Press Release, USNORTHCOM Supports Interim Housing for Evacuees (Sept. 6, 2005) (online at <http://www.northcom.mil/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.showstory&storyid=2C5B9AD4-A800-9725-95F93C404BE83394>)

² *Id.*

³ *Cruise Ships Spurned by Evacuees, Are Home to Displaced City Workers and Families*, New York Times (Sept. 16, 2005).

⁴ *Id.*

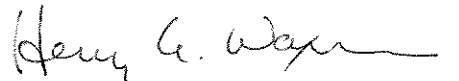
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To aid in our oversight of government contracting, please provide the following information:

1. Copies of all contracts between Carnival Cruise Lines and FEMA or the U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command; and
2. Any supporting documents calculating the costs and/or fixed price of the contract.
3. Copies of all requests for proposal, statements of work, or other documents soliciting bids from cruise ship companies to provide interim housing for Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Henry A. Waxman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member